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The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 22 June 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to bring to your attention the events of the last two days, which have seen a surge in Palestinian terrorist activity.

On Monday, the Israeli Defense Forces thwarted a planned suicide bombing. The would-be bomber was a 21-year-old Palestinian woman who had been entering Israel on a medical permit. She had received life saving-treatment at the Soroka Medical Center in Bar Sheva in the past and was supposedly coming to receive continued care there. Taking advantage of this, the bomber was planning to detonate herself at the Soroka Medical Center, intending to kill the same doctors and medical personnel who had saved her life in the past! As she entered the border crossing, she aroused the suspicion of Israeli security officials. When she realized that she had been discovered, she tried unsuccessfully to detonate the 10 kilograms of explosives she was carrying beneath her clothes. It is worth noting that the Palestinian Authority was given specific prior intelligence regarding this attack but did nothing to prevent it.

Perhaps more worrisome than the rise in terrorism, is the lengths to which terrorist organizations are willing to go to murder innocent Israelis. The cynical abuse of a medical permit to attempt to carry out a large-scale terrorist attack goes against every basic principle of morality, humanitarianism, decency and international law. During the past four years of the Palestinian campaign of terrorism, terrorist organizations have repeatedly used women and children to take advantage of Israel's goodwill and carry out attacks against Israeli civilians. Faced with this scourge of terrorism, Israel is forced to maintain stringent policies at its checkpoints in order to safeguard the security of its citizens. Monday's incident is just one more example of how terrorism affects not just Israelis but also Palestinians and the region as a whole.

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This incident occurred on the same day that two Israelis were murdered and three wounded in other terrorist attacks. Yevgeny Reider, a 28-year-old Israeli civilian, was shot and killed by Palestinian terrorists as he was travelling to work. His 16-year-old stepson, who was with him in the car, was wounded in the incident. In a separate incident, Palestinian terrorists attacked an Israeli Defense Force Engineers Corps working on the "Philadelphi" route in the Gaza Strip. Three soldiers were wounded in the attack, one of whom died of his wounds.

The continued use of terrorism by Palestinian terrorist organizations threatens to further destabilize the region and make the prospects for peace even more distant. In the Gaza Strip alone, the average number of terrorist attacks per week has risen to a range of 50 to 80, as opposed to an average of 10 to 15 in early February.

Israel cannot be expected to continue the many efforts it is undertaking to advance the peace process, while Palestinian terrorists cynically take advantage of those gestures to attack Israeli civilians. The Palestinian Authority must immediately fulfil its obligations and take all necessary steps to prevent and eliminate terrorist activity and create an atmosphere in which peace can be pursued.

Israel urges the international community to reaffirm its absolute rejection of terrorist tactics and to accept nothing less than the complete dismantling of terrorist organizations, as well as unyielding efforts to prevent terrorism and bring its perpetrators and supporters to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36 and 148, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative